

What Are The 8 Best Foods To Reduce Inflammation

What happens when your body gets inflamed? What even causes inflammation? Can you do anything to reduce this in your body or is it something you will have to deal with for the rest of your life?

Your immune system is activated when your body recognizes anything that is foreign — such as an intrusive microbe, plant pollen, or chemical. This also causes a process known as inflammation. When inflammation occurs, day after day, even though a foreign invader does not confront you, inflammation becomes your enemy.

Many of the most prominent illnesses that affect us — including cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, dementia, and Alzheimer's — have been connected to chronic inflammation.

The best way to fight inflammation comes not from a drug store, but a grocery store. According to Dr. Frank Hu, professor of Nutrition and Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, studies have shown that certain foods may have anti-inflammatory effects.

The adage "you are what you eat" is real. It's especially important when it comes to controlling inflammation and minimizing pain in your joints. Although certain foods can make it worse, there are lots of delicious anti-inflammatory foods that can relieve sore knees, finger pain, and even rheumatoid arthritis (RA) symptoms. Take note of these foods and stock them in your pantry during this quarantine.

Avocado

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Avocado is a superfood that contains fiber and essential micronutrients, including potassium, to help promote a healthy digestive function. It is also a low fructose food, so it is less likely to cause gas. "Foods like nuts and avocados are nutrient-dense," Lee says. "They also have a lot of fat in them, so you have to eat them in moderation."

Some studies reported lower rates of inflammatory markers NF-kB and IL-6 when people enjoyed a slice of avocado relative to those who eat the hamburger alone.

Unlike most other fruits, avocado is rich in monounsaturated fat and rich in vitamin E — two anti-inflammatory properties identified with a reduced rate of joint damage observed in early osteoarthritis. Regular consumption of avocados can also help control your cholesterol levels.

Dark Chocolate

coffe dark

Eating healthy doesn't mean missing out on chocolates. Varieties with at least 70% pure cocoa are good for you. Dark chocolates are also packed with antioxidants, which decrease inflammation. Flavanols are responsible for the anti-inflammatory properties of chocolate and maintain the health of the endothelial cells that line the arteries. These can reduce your disease-risk and lead to healthier aging.

Fish

chopping-board-cooking-cuisine-delicious-smaller

Red meat is notorious for having high levels of cholesterol and salt, both of which can trigger inflammation. To get your protein, switch to fatty fishes such as salmon, snapper, tuna, cod, halibut, and bass. These fish have high levels of omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA, which can help to reduce your inflammation. EPA and DHA minimize inflammation, which can lead to metabolic syndrome, cardiac disease, diabetes, and kidney disease.

Fruits

berries-blackberries-cherries-close-up-1149017

Citrus fruits, such as oranges and grapefruits, have less fructose compared to apples, mangoes, and pears, rendering absorption smoother and less likely to cause gas. Bananas are another low-fructose fruit rich in fiber, which contains inulin, a compound that promotes the development of healthy bacteria in the gut. Berries, cherries, and grapes contain anthocyanins, which is an anti-inflammatory antioxidant that reduces your risk of illness.

We recommend these fruits:

- apples
- blueberries
- cherries
- raspberries
- strawberries

Healthy Oil

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If you haven't cooked with olive oil yet, now is the time! Olive oil is incomparably high in oleic acid and omega-9 fatty acids, which helps to reduce inflammation. Eliminate cooking oil for safer and healthier alternatives such as olive oil, grape seed, and avocado oils.

Herbs and Spices (Garlic, Pepper, Turmeric)

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For centuries, we have used herbs to promote health and healing. Fresh herbs such as basil, thyme, and oregano are fantastic for cooking and can be excellent antioxidant sources. Garlic works great for swollen joints and is a perfect pair for some herbs we previously mentioned.

Chili peppers and bell peppers contain anti-inflammatory nutrients such as quercetin, sinapic acid, ferulic acid, and other antioxidants. Turmeric has a potent anti-inflammatory compound called curcumin. Pairing black pepper and turmeric will significantly improve the absorption of curcumin.

High Fiber Foods

assorted-vegetable-lot-1300972

Fiber reduces C-reactive protein (CRP), a component present in our blood that indicates inflammation. Foods with high fiber content include:

- whole grains
- beans
- vegetables and fruits

Eating whole grains made from whole grain kernels, such as oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, and whole-wheat flour, give you a higher degree of nutritious fiber. However, if you have a gluten allergy, whole grains of wheat will inversely add significantly to the inflammation.

Mushrooms

food-wood-kitchen-cutting-board-36438

Although there are a variety of species of mushrooms all over the world, only a handful are good to eat and commercially produced. Some edible mushrooms have compounds that can reduce inflammation. These also contain anti-inflammatories such as phenols.

Eating them raw or lightly cooked can allow you to reap their full anti-inflammatory capacity.

If your diet helps fight swelling and inflammation, then you should always eat well. It makes much more sense. Paired with other treatments and therapies, a diet rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties can keep the inflammation down so that you can continue living pain-free.

Sources:

Foods that fight inflammation <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/foods-that-fight-inflammation>

The 13 Most Anti-inflammatory Foods You Can Eat

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/13-anti-inflammatory-foods#section2>

12 Foods That Reduce Inflammation <https://www.healthline.com/health/rheumatoid-arthritis/foods-that-reduce-inflammation>

6 Foods That Cause Inflammation <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-foods-that-cause-inflammation#7>

Hass Avocado Modulates Postprandial Vascular Reactivity and Postprandial Inflammatory Responses to a Hamburger Meal in Healthy Volunteers

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23196671/>